

## FIRST MEETING OF THE COMBINED GREEK COMMUNITIES

POINTS TO BE MADE AT MEETING TO BE HELD ON THE 19TH SEPTEMBER, 1974  
AT THE PRESIDENT HOTEL.

Gentlemen,

*Necessity of Meeting*  
I thank you all for accepting my invitation to attend this Meeting this evening. I thank you for allowing me to address you in this instance before we get onto any formal discussions. I realise without any doubt that there are more capable people than I here this evening but on the other hand in my own limited sphere of performance with regard to communal life I see certain shortcomings which I deemed absolutely necessary that a Meeting such as this should take place.

*TyP. of Problems Faced.*  
BISHOP & LEWIS  
Gentlemen, we have been holding office for a long time. We, I am certain, have all matured with the problems of Greek communal life. We are fully aware of all the aspects of the problems that we are facing namely schooling, Church, social activities, family problems, old age, medical, etc. All the facets that have to do with ones every day life. However, we have had to face and we are going to face problems necessitating positive performance with regard to our organisation in South Africa, some our Country by birth and to others are adopted homeland. Let us realise at the outset gentlemen that we are now handling a lively political body. A body of people who are beginning to express their thoughts and their feelings, a body of people who have now made indents in the various grades of life in South Africa. Our organisations consist of people that are respected in some cases and dis-respected in others such as one would find in every nation.

*ISOLATE & LOOK at OUR DUTY IN S.A. Not Greece ONLY AS Greeks.*  
*Duty to Perform with regard to S.A.*  
Let us realise that we have a duty, not only to perform among ourselves with regard to the furthering of our communal life, but we now also have a duty to perform with regard to South Africa. The only way to do this is by presenting a united front, by presenting a body which can be formally recognised by the central authority.  
*ORGANISE for better Representation*  
I have no doubt that you are all aware that a number of Ministers have expressed the wish that it is superfluous discussing problems affecting the Greeks of South Africa with them if it is not done on an organised basis. It is no longer, especially in view of certain bad publicity that has been forthcoming, correct and it is not ethically correct for us to approach individual Ministers, individual M.Ps or Senators in order to discuss these problems. All these people are aware of us, they deem us an organised body and would very much like to work with us. We, gentlemen, let us bear in mind are going to have to work in an organised central body. We are going to be directed to participate very strongly in the organisation of Civil Defence. I have already been directed on my side, I know

my duties in my personal capacity which are not to be discussed here, but I have also received my instructions with regard to Civil Defence in South Africa pertaining to the Greek Community of Alberton. Let us not, gentlemen, start the usual business that we cannot co-operate, we are unable to co-operate, no gentlemen, we can co-operate, we must co-operate and we will co-operate because the body that is going to be formed is not going to tolerate people that cannot co-operate. You will tell me what can such a body do. Yes, a body such as this when it is organised will be able to do a lot gentlemen. Let nobody tell me that he does not need this body because he will be able to run his own Community, his own School, his own Church and his own dancers and therefore does not need this co-operation. Let it be remembered that this body is going to adopt a positive attitude. We will not allow negative thought to enter this organisation. Anybody who has any negative thoughts in his mind at the moment I ask him to put a plus sign in front of it immediately and to wait his turn to have this matter noted so that it can be discussed with a positive aspect. Let us not, gentlemen, try and specialise in disorganising ourselves, it is the easiest matter. Let us positively organise ourselves. Let this, gentlemen, I ask you be the first occasion of such an organisation and an expression of mutual feelings. Let us agree on matters that we agree. Let us not agree to disagree on matters but let us agree from the outset. Obviously there will be matters which we disagree with but these matters are to be noted and to be discussed and the first possibly solution to be found. It is obvious that we cannot have unanimous agreement and solutions positive to every aspect but the mere fact that we are aware and we record our problems and we record how each one is handling their problem in their specific area is allowing for this unity to develop. The mere fact that we do not like how the next man is running his affairs does not matter as long as we are aware of how he is running his affairs, as long as we attempt to better any shortcomings let us remember, gentlemen, that there are a lot of matters that we can immediately agree on without any problem e.g. schooling. Are we conducting the right type of schooling for our Greek children to-day? Do we know what we are doing? Are we having correct inspections or are we perhaps wasting everybody's time. Do we know what goal we are following? Is there a goal or do we just hope to say that we are learning Greek for the sake of heritage. What purpose is this schooling serving? Let us not forget that as opposed to quite possibly my time when an attempt was made to learn a bit of Greek that to-day we have professional Teachers available but what are we doing to satisfy ourselves that the correct thing is done by these professional Teachers with regard to our children. Let us not forget that we are taxing our children. Are we doing correctly? Are we serving our children to the best of our ability? Are we not overloading them? All matters such as this need discussion from time to time.

No one  
is independent  
we are all  
interdependent!

Church - Needless to say, gentlemen, I don't have to dwell in this matter but we are aware of our very, very serious problems that we are facing with regard to our Church. Not only the running, organisation and functioning of the Church in my opinion, but also the fact that certain things are taking place which is causing us to loose a lot of our followers, especially, unfortunately, to Jehovah's Witnesses. I think we all have the courage of our convictions to agree that there are a lot of shortcomings in this capacity. Church Problem

Immigration - We always discuss the question of immigration. Nothing can be done, gentlemen, if we do not present a united front. Now to present a united front to discuss a matter such as immigration, is it going to be very difficult for us to agree, surely not gentlemen, surely its not difficult, surely its not difficult for representatives to be created out of a body such as this in order to deal with a problem that we are fully aware of. Gentlemen, I do not want to go on enumerating all the other factors that need discussion. Possibly we are all mutually aware of some, others may have certain specific factors. We want to form the background, the foundation of our movements. We do not want to tell each other how to run a dance or a social. We do not want to tell each other when to buy our Church candles but we wish to discuss policy that may affect us, policy that whether we like it or not will rebound on to us and we have a moral duty to take care of these matters if we ~~per~~report to be todays leaders of the South African Greeks. Example of Immigration

Gentlemen, again I thank you. Let this be our first meeting. Lets get down to a bit of formal discussion. Lets note certain points. Let us arrange to meet frequently. Let us not arrange to meet every month or week, obviously then we will get tired, but once a quarter, once every three months we can arrange to meet. We can arrange to meet at centrally situated places where we can all travel equal distances. After our second or third meeting perhaps even earlier we can arrange to call in the leaders of the other Communities. There are not many more so it will not be difficult to pull them in. I think for the sake of record there are approximately twenty six Communities and more than half are represented here this evening.

Gentlemen, again I thank you but let us not become specialists in showing that there are matters that we cannot agree on, let not anybody please put forward matters in setting about a discussion on how to disagree. I ask that before we speak and before we express a thought that we check our words and that what we state will be beneficial towards unity and fermenting this Board rather than a statement which will make everybody suddenly say "ah, but I don't agree with this and I don't agree with you there." No gentlemen I ask you please to put forward positive statements if it happens to be negative in your mind change it into a positive factor before you make it known to the rest of us. Gentlemen, again thank you. At approximately 9.30 - 10 o'clock there will be cocktails served with drinks - I ask you to join me and I thank you very much again for coming this evening. Positive outlook needed.

Let us now proceed with the election of a temporary Chairman this evening in order to conduct the Meeting and somebody to make the necessary recordings. Let us not forget Gentlemen that we must act according to our capabilities and this is not going to be a body for ~~votes~~, it has got to be a body for positive results.

Thank you.